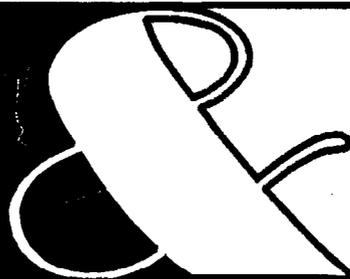


hazardous substances



Public Health

A publication of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

Volume 2, Supplement 1

Special APHA Edition

November 1991

What is ATSDR?

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), located in Atlanta, Georgia, is an agency of the Public Health Service (PHS), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The environmental health staff of ATSDR plays a critical role in implementing the Agency's mission as mandated by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or Superfund).

The mission of ATSDR is to prevent or mitigate adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life resulting from exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.

To carry out the Agency's mission, ATSDR conducts activities in the following areas:

Public Health Assessments

- ATSDR evaluates information on the release of hazardous substances into the environment to assess any current or future effect on public health, develops health advisories or other health recommendations, and identifies studies or actions needed to evaluate and mitigate or prevent human health effects. The Agency conducts public health assessments for all waste sites on the National Priorities List (NPL) and in response to petitions from concerned individuals and organizations.

Health Investigations

- ATSDR contributes to an increased understanding of the relationship between exposure to hazardous sub-

stances and adverse human health effects by conducting epidemiologic, surveillance, and other human health studies.

Exposure and Disease Registries

- The Agency establishes and maintains registries of persons exposed to selected chemicals and is developing a registry of persons with specific diseases and illnesses resulting from exposure.

Emergency Response

- ATSDR provides health consultations to states, local agencies, and health care providers for environmental emergencies, as well as training for emergency response personnel.

Toxicological Profiles

- ATSDR summarizes and makes available to the public data on the health effects of hazardous substances. The Agency also identifies significant gaps in knowledge and initiates research in toxicology and health effects where needed.

Health Education

- The Agency develops and disseminates to physicians and other health care providers materials on the health effects of toxic substances; maintains a list of sites closed or restricted to the public because of hazardous substance contamination; and develops and maintains an extensive training program for health professionals.

Applied Research

- ATSDR conducts or sponsors research to increase scientific knowledge about adverse human health effects caused by or related to exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

New Guidelines Announced for Childhood Lead Poisoning

HHS Secretary Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., has announced a new and lower "threshold of concern" for lead levels in children's blood. The level considered toxic is now set at 10 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL) of whole blood -- less than half the level of 25 identified by CDC in 1985. The change was necessary because new data have shown that levels previously considered safe "are in fact associated with significant adverse effects," Secretary Sullivan said, speaking at an October conference on childhood lead poisoning, sponsored by the Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning and cosponsored by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

The policy change, set forth in the Centers for Disease Control's revised statement *Preventing Lead Poisoning in Young Children*, provides guidelines for action by diverse groups, including public health officials, pediatricians, government agencies, and private citizens. The new threshold represents a new low blood lead level goal toward which the nation should move for all children, especially through concerted community prevention activities, Secretary Sullivan said.

On November 19, 1991, the offices of *Hazardous Substances and Public Health* will be moving to a new location. Our mailing address will remain the same, but our phone numbers will change. Our new telephone number will be 404/639-6206; our fax number will be 404/639-6208.

Preventing Lead Poisoning replaces the single, all-purpose definition of lead poisoning with "levels of action" at which different interventions should be triggered by specific levels of lead in the blood of exposed children, with highest priority given to children with the highest blood lead levels (see table below).

Copies of the statement, *Preventing Lead Poisoning in Young Children, 1991*, are available free of charge from Publication Activities, Office of the Director, National Center for Environmental Health and Injury Control, Mailstop F29, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30333.

Interpretation of blood lead test results and follow-up activities: class of child based on blood lead concentration

Class	Blood lead concentration (µg/dL)	Comment
I	≤ 9	A child in Class I is not considered to be lead-poisoned.
IIA	10-14	Many children (or a large proportion of children) with blood lead levels in this range should trigger communitywide childhood lead poisoning prevention activities. Children in this range may need to be rescreened more frequently.
IIB	15-19	A child in Class IIB should receive nutritional and educational interventions and more frequent screening. If the blood lead level persists in this range, environmental investigation and intervention should be done.
III	20-44	A child in Class III should receive environmental evaluation and remediation and a medical evaluation. Such a child may need pharmacologic treatment of lead poisoning.
IV	45-69	A child in Class IV will need both medical and environmental interventions, including chelation therapy.
V	≥ 70	A child with Class V lead poisoning is a medical emergency. Medical and environmental management must begin immediately.

Source: CDC, *Preventing Lead Poisoning in Young Children*, October 1991.

ATSDR Agenda for APHA 1991

Topics related to environmental health will be featured throughout the 1991 APHA meeting. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry will present the sessions listed below.

Saturday, November 9

8:30 AM - 5 PM C.E. Institute 2 ATSDR Training Program: Clues To Unraveling the Association Between Illness and Environmental Exposure (General)

Sunday, November 10

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM C.E. Institute 3 ATSDR Training Program: Clues To Unraveling the Association Between Illness and Environmental Exposure (Advanced)

10 AM - 4 PM Environment Section Business Meeting

Noon - 5 PM ATSDR exhibit highlighting issues related to childhood lead poisoning

Monday, November 11

9 AM - 4 PM ATSDR exhibit highlighting issues related to childhood lead poisoning

4 PM - 5:30 PM International Health and Impacts I

7 PM - 8:30 PM Environmental and Emergency Response (HAZMAT) Medicine

Tuesday, November 12

8:30 AM - 10 AM International Health and Impacts II

9 AM - 4 PM ATSDR exhibit highlighting issues related to childhood lead poisoning

2 PM - 5 PM ATSDR Health Investigations of Superfund-Related Sites: Case Studies of Note

Wednesday, November 13

9 AM - 4 PM ATSDR exhibit highlighting issues related to childhood lead poisoning

Noon - 2 PM Occupational Health and Safety Business Meeting

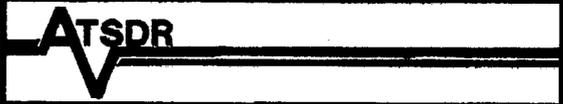
2 PM - 3:30 PM Risk Communication

4 PM - 5:30 PM ATSDR: Environmental Education in Occupational Medicine

4 PM - 5:30 PM Ethical Considerations in Measuring and Reducing Health Risks

7 PM - 10 PM Health Investigations Near Hazardous Waste Sites

7 PM - 8:30 PM Innovative Approaches to the Dissemination of Environmental Health Information



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From the Editor

DEAR AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AND CONFERENCE ATTENDEES:

Welcome to Atlanta, home of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. To acquaint you with some of our Agency's activities, we are offering you, our guests, this special supplement to *Hazardous Substances and Public Health (HSPH)*. The purpose of this year-old publication is to communicate information aimed at mitigating the adverse health effects of exposure to hazardous substances.

During 1991, *HSPH* featured articles that described a fatal case of lead poisoning; the health effects found among workers at a North Carolina incinerator; an ideal information system on toxic health effects; the establishment of a national clearinghouse on environmental health for state health officials and policymakers; and advances in the development of technology that will enable scientists to detect biomarkers of hazardous exposure in the immune systems of exposed persons. Our readers also learned about state-developed programs and strategies aimed at educating health professionals and the public about various issues in environmental health. Our *Calendar* and *Announcements* columns kept readers informed of key meetings, training opportunities, services, and publications related to environmental health.

If these topics interest you, we'll be happy to add you to our mailing list. Just fill out the enclosed order form and return it to us.

Once you begin receiving *HSPH*, we hope that you will find it a valuable resource for your work and that you will share with us news of your own efforts in environmental public health services.

Enjoy your stay in Atlanta!

Teresa L. Ramsey
Managing Editor

Hazardous Substances and Public Health

Meetings

EXPOSURE ANALYSIS CONFERENCE

On November 18-21, 1991, the International Conference on Total Exposure Monitoring, Modeling, and Assessment will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Westin Peachtree Hotel. Sponsors of the event include ATSDR, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the International Agency on Exposure Analysis.

The conference will bring together scientists, engineers, and regulatory specialists interested in human exposure and risk assessment from around the world. Technical sessions will be oriented to addressing the collection and use of human exposure data, especially the use of data for exposure assessments, risk assessments, and regulatory decisionmaking.

For more information, please contact Sandee Coulberson, ATSDR, 1600 Clifton Rd., NE, Mailstop F48, Atlanta, GA 30333; telephone (404) 488-4855; fax (404) 488-4034.

NGA: MAKING INFORMATION WORK

The National Governors' Association's fourth annual conference on integrating data for decisionmaking, "Making Information Work," will be held in Washington, D.C., January 18-23, 1992. The aim of the conference is to explore the role information plays in critical policy decisions regarding education, environment, and health.

For more information, please contact Kristen Gooch, Making Information Work Conference, National Governors' Association, 444 North Capitol Street, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001; telephone (202) 624-5426; fax (202) 624-5313.

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